

IN THE CLAIMS:

Please amend the claims as follows:

9. (Amended) A method for producing a functional element for use in an electric, an electronic or an optical device, which comprises:

(a) gasifying, at a temperature of from 30 to 600 °C, at least one metal compound comprising a metal moiety and a non-metal moiety, said metal compound having volatilizability or sublimability and having the capability to react with at least one oxide-forming substance to form a metal oxide corresponding to said metal compound, to thereby obtain a metal compound gas,
and

(b) applying the obtained metal compound gas onto a surface of a substrate which is placed in a reaction zone containing said oxide-forming substance and which is heated to a temperature which is higher than the temperature of said metal compound gas and which is not higher than 800 °C, to thereby contact the surface of said substrate with said metal compound gas in the presence of said oxide-forming substance for a period of time sufficient to grow a plurality of metal oxide needles on the surface of said substrate and form the functional element of claim 1.
